

02-04-98

FOR ALL THE VAISHNAVAS WHO ARE INITIATED INTO BRAHMASAMBANDHA
AND THOSE WHO DESIRE TO BE INITIATED,
IN BEAUTIFUL, COMPREHENSIBLE LANGUAGE

BRAHMASAMBANDHA OR SELF - DEDICATION

પુસ્તકાલય : પુષ્ટિ સાહિત્ય પુસ્તકાલય
કાંદીવલી (વેસ્ટ)
સુરેન્દ્ર જમનાદાસ શાહ
C/o. સુરેન્દ્ર જમનાદાસ શાહ
DISCOURSES DEL. M : 9833272383,
ગાંધીધામ (વેસ્ટ) 9320787642

H.H. GOSWAMI SHRI CHANDRAGOPALJI MAHODAYA
BARODA

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P. Krishnakumar Sharma
Baroda.

Donors For the Publication of this Book :-

Jai Shree Krishna

From

Ketul C. Patel

&

Smt. Kshipra K. Patel
Bombay.

Publishers

SHRI VALLABH VITTHAL
GRANTH PRAKASHAN MANDAL TRUST

BARODA.

ent
high opacity
Paper Mills Ltd.
Karnataka, India.
- 581 325
- 22231835
- 22231838
coastpaper.com
n.com
oor, 10-A, Kasturba Road,

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Pujya Goswar
Shri Chandragopalji Mahodaya
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Jagadguru Shree
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BANDHA OR
ANA (Gujarati)
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Smt. Brijlata Bahuji, Vadoda

a (Hindi)

Dr. Ramanlal N. Tal

achanamrita

Edited and explained
Pujya Goswami Shri Chandragop
Mahodaya, Vadodara

lies (Gujarati)

Edited by Pujya Goswa
Shri Chandragopalji Mahoda
(Editor: 'Acharya Shri Vallabh

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Shri Jethalal Chhotalal Sh
alias 'Urmil', Sa

22 Copies
Brilliance 2 Business
Nest Co

Publisher :

Shri Vallabha Vitthal Granth Prakashan Mandal Trust

C/o. Jitendra M. Vajir,
'Bhavna', C-9, 4th floor,
S.V.Road, Kandivali(w),
Bombay 400 067.

Phone : (R) 806 5775
(O) 888 2536

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First Edition - 1000 copies.

'Janmashtami' August - 1993

Price : Rs. 7 = 00

Printer
'ad graphika
Vrishchik Computer Services

B-50, Citizen Society
Nr. Atmajyoti Asharam
Ellora Park, Baroda 390 007

3B/204, Dattani Nagar
S.V.Road, Borivali(w)
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For the propagation and spread of the divine principles of Jagadguru Shri Vallabhacharyaji, which are very useful and highly beneficial to everybody, and to make the principles reach the people of all walks of life in the world, Pu. Goswami Shri Chandragopalaji Mahoday (Baroda) established "Shri Vallabh Vitthal Grantha Prakashan Mandal" Trust on 9th day of the dark half of Magshar in 2041, the day of manifestation of Shri Vitthalnathji Prabhucharan. The chief purpose behind the establishment of the Trust by him is this that the books by Shri Acharyaji and Shri Prabhucharan, and the commentaries by the respected Goswamis and other scholars on them and the translations of these in different languages may be published by this trust .

This trust has been officially registered according to the Bombay Public Trust Act under "E-3548 Baroda. for the management of this trust, there are at present seven trustee, as follows :

- (1) President - Pu.Go. Shri Chandragopalji Mahoday, Baroda.
- (2) Vice - Presedent - Pu. Smt.Brijalata Vahuji, Baroda.
- (3) Secretary - Shri Krishnakant K. Shah, Baroda.
- (4) Trustee - Shri Jitendra M. Vajir, Bombay.
- (5) Trustee - Pu. Smt. Nikunjata betiji, Bombay.
- (6) Trustee - Pu. Go. Shri Yogesh Kumarji, Baroda.
- (7) Trustee - Shri Bhupendra bhai B. Dhabalia, Rajkot.

Moreover, the honorary manager of the "Acharya Shri Vallabh" (Monthly), Shri Jasvantray M. Kanani is from Baroda and the assistants in the work of the monthly are

- (1) Shri Chandreshbhai J. Patel, Bombay.
- (2) Shri Prafulbhai Dholakia, Bombay.
- (3) Shri Sureshbhai Madhani, Vasai, Bombay and
- (4) Shri Kirtibhai C. Mehta, Baroda.

We have published books uptill now, and have also published the Vaishnava Calendar for the years 1986 and 1987.

Moreover for the last four years the Trust has been publishing Vaishnav panchanga (together with the gloss).

The Panchanga is given as a gift to the subscribers of "Acharya Shri Vallabha". Its retail sale is done, at the cost price.

Over and above this since 1986, a Gujarati Monthly, "Acharya Shri Vallabha" is published every month. This monthly is edited by the founder President of the Trust, Pu. Go. Shri Chandragopalji Mahodaya. The annual subscription of this is Rs. 35-00, and the subscription for life is Rs.350-00. Within the annual subscription of Rs. 35-00, every subscriber gets the Vaishnav Panchanga as a gift. The cost price of this Panchanga is Rs. 25- 00. Thus for the payment of only Rs.10-00, the 12 issues of the 12 months are sent to the subscribers. Along with this the expenses for management have to be incurred. The Trust therefore incurs a loss of more than Rs. 16-00 per subscriber. The trust publishes the monthly at the price which all can afford, so that the economical backward people can also read it and be benefited. Thus fore this purpose the trust incurs loss for each subscriber.

The desire was cherished for a very long period that a monthly in English may be published. This has been realised by the grace of *Bhagavan*. Our Trust started publication of "Shree Vallabhacharya" in English. The monthly is edited by Pu. Asau. Shree Brijlata Vahuji, who is also the Vice - president of the Trust. It has been decided that this English monthly should contain literature of three kinds; (1) for children (2) for youths (3) for matured and old persons.

At present this monthly is published for children and young persons. The subscription of it is the same as that of the Gujarati monthly "Acharya Shri Vallabha". The address for correspondence and payment of subscription is -

"Shree Vallabhacharya" (English) Jitendrabhai M. Vajir, 'Bhavna' Bldg., C-9 fourth floor, S.V. Road, Kandivali(West), Bombay 400067 Phone No. 8065775

Moreover a musical cassette of Pushtimargiya hymns - "Vahi Rasana Jo Hariguna Gaye" sung in the sweet voices of Pujya Shri Brijlata Vahuji, Maharaja Shri Ranjitsinhji Gaekwad of Baroda and Shri Jaidevbhai Bhojak was brought out in April 92. Along with this a booklet containing the hymns, commentaries, information regarding the Trust and the singers and the pictures of Goswamis has also been published. The nominal price of the cassette along with the booklet is Rs.32-00.

We have in all seven books in Hindi, Gujarati and English ready for publication. The cost of their publications would be Rs. 8000 to Rs.30,000 each.

We heartily request all Vaishnavas to start the flow of their donations for the publication - work of the Trust so that we can publish all the literature quickly and in better shape, and make it reach all Vaishnavas.

Vik. Sam. 2049,
-algun Sud - 2.
Sunday - 23-2-1993
Baroda.

Jasvantray M. Kanani
Manager,
Shri Vallabha Vitthal
Granth Prakashan
Mandal Trust, Baroda.

A Brief Introduction Of The Translator

P. KRISHNA KUMAR SHARMA

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In-charge of Maitreyi Free Charitable Dispensary, and Dayalbag Charitable Homeopathic Clinic, Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh.

Worked as a Junior Advocate with M/S. Tyabji & Co. and Bhaishankar Kanga Girdharlal & Co., Solicitors, Bombay.

Junior Advocate to late P. Krishnalal Shah, Advocate, District Court, Baroda.

Worked as Administrative Officer of Dwarakadhish Mandir, and personal properties of H. H. Maharajshri of Kankroli:

Retired from active life and engaged in bringing out in English the works of Mahaprabhu Shri Vallabhacharyaji.

HARI OM!

SHRI DWARAKESHO JAYATI.

A WORD FROM THE TRANSLATOR.

यत् पादाब्जरजोध्यानात् फलितं यत्र मे मनः।
तमहं सर्वदा वन्दे वालकृष्णं ब्रजेश्वरम् ॥

When I was asked by H. H. Goswami Shri Chandragopalji Mahodaya to write an English version of his book "BRAHMASAMBANDHA" I had my own doubts, because the book was written in Gujarati. As I tried to find correct expression in English I found it was not so difficult as I was afraid of.

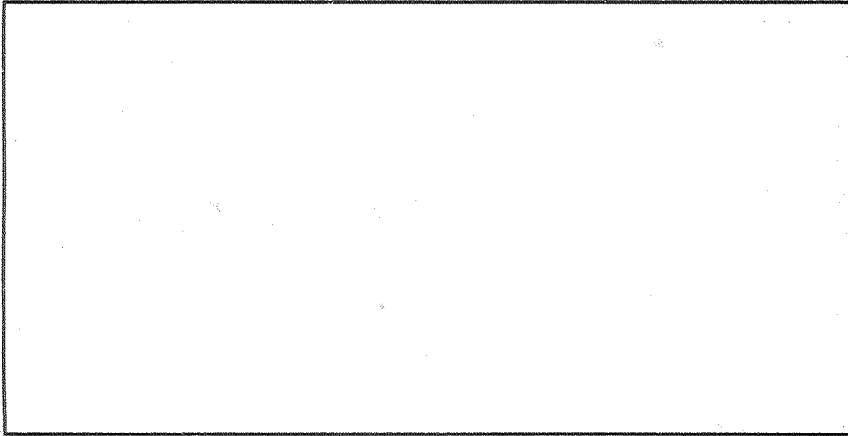
The English version is now before the discerning reading public and I trust it will be received with open hands. I do admit that it is not that easy to find fluent expressions to deeper enunciations of philosophical thoughts. Secondly, while attempting to translate some one else's expressed thoughts one should not lose contact of the originality of the author. In this, my translation, I tried to bring about a balance between those original expressions and clarity of the language used to convey those thoughts.

I hope I have succeeded in this aim. I shall be glad to receive any suggestions from the learned readers.

Baithak Mandir,
Kevda Bagh,
Baroda. 390001.

P. Krishnakumar Sharma

The "GADYA MANTRA" should be written by Shri Gurudev and it should be kept in a place where you offer Seva; it should be read in a state of sanctity, Never read when you have not taken your bath, in an impure state of family when a child is newly born (Vridhhi-ashaucha), and at the death of a family member or a relative (Maran-ashaucha), during monthly periods and other such states of unholiness when reading of this 'Gadya Mantra' is prohibited.



THE IMPLIED MEANING OF BRAHMASAMBANDHA MANTRA

As thousands of years have passed due to separation from *Bhagavaan* Krishna, the affliction and misery which have been generated in the heart due to the separation of Krishna in the form of *Ananda*, I, that *Jiva*, in whom this sentiment has become dormant, dedicate along with my 'Atman or Soul, my body, the organs of senses, the vital breaths(*Praana*), my conscience and the attributes thereof, my spouse, home, progeny family - relations, the *Punya* or righteousness and *Papa* or the wickedness one earns by way of effects (*Phala*) of previous births related to this or other world, to *Bhagavaan* Krishna who is the most dear one of all Gopi folks. I am your servant, Oh Krishna I am Yours!

SIDDHANTARAHASYAM

COMPOSED

BY

Jagadguru Shrimad Vallabhacharyaji

*shravanasyaamale pakshe ekadashyaam mahanishi/
saakshaad Bhagavataa prokatm tadaksharasha uchyate ||1||*

*brahmasambandhakaranaat sarveshaam dehajivayoh/
savadoshanivrittirhi doshaah panchavidhaah smritaaah ||2||*

*sahajaa deshakalotthaa loka veda nirupitaah/
samyogajaah sparshajaashcha na mantavyaah kathanchana ||3||*

*anyathaa savadoshaanaam na nivrittih kathanchana/
asamarpitavastunaam tasmaad varjanamaacharet ||4||*

*nivedibhih samarpyaiva sarvam kuryaaditi sthitih /
na matam devadevasya saamibhuktasamarpanam ||5||*

*tasmadaadau sarvakaarye sarvavastusamarpanam/
dattaapahaaravachanam tathaa cha sakalam Hareh ||6||*

*na graahyamiti vaakymhi bhinna marga param matam/
sevakaanaam yathaa loke vyavahaarah prasidhyti ||7||*

*tathaa kaaryam samarpyaiva sarveshaam brahmataa tatah/
Gangatvam savadoshaanaam gunadoshaadivarnanaa ||8||*

Gangaatvena nirupyaa syaat tadvadatraapi chaiva hi ||8¹/₂ ||

Iti Shri Vallabhacharya virachitam Siddhaantarahasyam.

BRAHMASAMBANDHA OR SELF-DEDICATION

श्रावणस्यामले पक्षे एकादश्यां महानिशि ।

साक्षाद् भगवता प्रोक्तं तदक्षरश उच्यते ॥

*Shravanasyamale pakshe ekadashyam mahanishi /
sakshad Bhagavata proktam tadaksharasha uchyate //*

(Siddhantarahasyam)

From times immemorial, *Daivi jivas* have forgotten their Lord and Master, Shri Krishna. With a view to making them realise their own *svarupa* or form, so that they may understand the true form of Divinity, and also with a view to casting the clouds of worldly illusions away, and also in order to establish indispensable attachment towards the feet of the Divine Being, this sacrament of *Brahmasan bandha* is enunciated, through which a *Jiva* may obtain a right to the worship or *seva* of *Bhagavan*, along with the achievement of the ultimate shelter (*sharanagati*) in the form of surrender of one's ownself (*atmasamarpanatmaka*).

The real fulfilment of Brahmasambandha is the dedicated extinction of ego along with the *Atman* at the feet of *Bhagavan* after having achieved the extinction of the great primary elements in the ego in which the internal organ is dominant. The great primary elements belong to the body for which there are deep knots of the sense of possession bound in our minds.

There are two ways of realising the Supreme Being : One is called '*Jnana Yoga*', (ज्ञान योग) the other is known as '*Bhakti Yoga*'. The succession of creation (*srushti*) has been described

at the beginning, starting with that element called, '*Mahat-tattva*' upto that element known as '*Prithvi*' or earth. The same succession has to be reversed and one element has to be dissolved in the previous one till this '*Ahamkara*' or quality of darkness or ignorance is dissolved in that '*Mahat-tattva*' by means of which that pure element can be obtained. This method is known as '*Laya Yoga*' or employment of dissolving process. This is the procedure followed in the *Jnana marga* (ज्ञान मार्ग).

In the opinion of Shri Vallabhacharya the most cherished *yoga* is *Bhakti* or devotion. Through the means of devotion towards Divinity or through, (making one's mind joined fully with *Para Brahman* is the *Seva*) the means of worship or *Seva* a devotee should attempt to turn his mind into an assiduous devotion (*Vyasana*). One has to attempt to triumph over the organs of senses which have outward and evil mental tendencies, through a state of close and intent application of mind. One has to turn one's organs of senses inward and place them in that Supreme Being who is situated in one's heart. In this process one has to convert every atom of one's body in achieving a new divine body. With the assumption of this new body (which in truth belongs to Divinity and is meant for the service of Him) one has to deluge it with an understanding of the sentiment of Divine Being and try to achieve the experience of that Bliss known as '*Bhagavad-ananda*'.

This particular *Bhakti marga* is the most cherished precedence of Shri Vallabhacharya for which a *Jiva* is initiated into Brahmasambandha as a means of original cultivation of mind.

In his heart every *Daivi Jiva* entertains the form of that element called '*Bhagavat-tattva*' which lies in the form of an embodiment of sentiment and as an abandonment or separation. But this element is in dormant or concealed state. Just as when one combines positive and negative wires, he gets light, so also when the dormant feelings get in contact with

the full and strong enlightening emotions of a *Guru*, the mental screen of the disciple begins to glow with the spiritual aura and becomes capable of perceiving the Divine Being in his inner self.

I do believe that at the time of receiving or giving the initiation of *Brahmasambandha*, if the disciple can hold his mind strongly collected, and the initiating *Guru* is strong in mind, intense in emotions, agile in actions, pure at heart, free from impurities, devoid of all interest in sensuous activities and is an embodiment of the sentiment of divine feelings, there can be no doubt about obtaining an awakening of the feelings towards Divinity.

It is definite that the sentiments and emotions of a *Guru* are bound to leave their influence upon the minds of disciples in greater or lesser degree; therefore Shri Vallabhacharya has instructed in his work called '*Nibandha*' as "कृष्णसेवापरं वीक्ष्य". (seeing properly that the *Guru* is absolutely attached to the *seva* of *Bhagavan* Shreekrishna).

Even though the stories narrated by Shri Shukadevji and listened to by the king Parikshit and those narrated by Suta and listened to by Shaunaka and others are the same, yet on the strength of intensity and triviality of emotion of the preacher and the recipients, the results obtained will remain high or low according to the eligibility of recipients.

If the *Guru* himself is engrossed in sensuous occupations but expects his disciples to maintain austerities and lead a life of purity, it will not give the right satisfaction to the disciple like a body which has been devoid of inner animation. For this reason alone, in our *sampradaya* (tradition) the '*Acharayatva*' is admitted for Shri Vallabhacharya; therefore, according to the traditional concepts the primary guru who initiates the *mantra* of *Brahmasambandha* is Shri Mahaprabhuji.

The *Brahmasambandha* is a mode of sacrament whereby a relationship is established between the '*Jivatman*' or the individual soul and the Supreme or Highest Entity i.e. '*Paramatman*'.

Due to lack of proper enlightenment on the concept of the *Brahmasambandha* different kinds of misconceptions have been spreading in the public mind, and if one looks at it from one view point, it is quite natural.

Let us consider the initiation of the *Brahmasambandha* with a deeper sense of understanding. What is meant by the *Brahmasambandha*? What necessity is there for a *Jiva* to obtain this initiation?

Is this tradition of obtaining the *Brahmasambandha* just 500 years old? Then what was in vogue before that period? Such questions arise before us, when we begin to consider about this initiation.

We have explained before that the initiation of the *Brahmasambandha* means an attempt to establish a relationship between the individual soul and the Supreme Being. It means taking the ultimate resort known as '*Sharanaagati*' in *Brahman* along with the surrender of one's own self. It further means the discarding of that feeling of possessiveness of all material objects of this world. Thus sacrificing everything, one has to accept the supremacy of *Brahman* on all the objects of the world and at all places of existence.

In other words this means : " I am not the master and owner of all these material objects, but I am a destitute (*akinchana*) servant of the divinity or I am an '*amsha*' or part of HIM and HE is my Master." The very objective of *Brahmasambandha* is to inculcate this concept in the internal organ i.e. mind of a *jiva*.

The fulfilment of the purpose of this initiation lies in accepting the bondage in the form of '*Sevaka*' or servant of that *ParaBrahman* and *Purushottama*, Shri Krishna, after being released from all other bonds created by the influence of *Maya*.

When a sentiment of natural love or devotion begins to manifest in the heart of a devotee towards *Paramatman*, Who

resides within in a very subtle form, that devotee will be able to tie down that Divine Being in the so-called noose of love.

It will not be improper to use the word "*alaukika lagna*" (divine marriage) or attaching one's self to another as a synonym of *Brahmasambandha*. Just as in worldly affairs, "*lagna*" indicates close human links between a bride and a groom, so also in *Brahmasambandha* both the *jivatman* and *Paramatman* will be fastened in a single thread of '*Sneha*' or tenderness.

The procedure in performances of marriages, in a broad sense, is as follows. In the first instance the would-be bride and bridegroom will look at the photographs of each other. Thereafter, they will select each other. Then a date will be fixed for marriage and the Brahmin will be called. With the completion of '*grahashanti*' or propitiation of planets etc., when the bride groom reaches the *pandal* or '*lagna-mandapa*', first the "*madhuparka vidhi*" or offering respect to the bridegroom on his arrival, will be completed and thereafter the bride will be entrusted to the hands of the bridegroom for ever after performing the ceremony of *kanyandana*.

In a similar way, even in *Brahmasambandha*, at first the picture of '*Jivatma*' will be shown to the divinity. Then HE will be addressed: "O Prabhu ! this is the *jivatma* to whom You (i.e. *Bhagavan*) are going to offer your shelter. Kindly look into his qualities or lack of qualities lest there should arise any objections at a later stage. If there is anything to be said please say it freely in the initiative stage. At a later stage it may not be possible to change." For this reason Shrimad Acharyashri states at the time of presenting the 'picture' of *jivatman* before *Paramatman*: "O *Bhagavan* ! this *jiva* is like this, Will you kindly accept him?"

Referring to the condition of a *jiva*, Acharyashri has commented: "सहस्रपरिवत्सर" (*sahasraparivatsara*) meaning that this *jiva* has been separated from the 'Divine Being' for

uncountable years and that the strong feelings that should have been generated from this long separation have become extinct.

When the divinity condescends to accept the *jivatman*, it is said that a 'picture' of that divinity will be shown to the *jivatman*. Then it will be explained to him that this is that divinity in whose shelter *jiva* desires to reside, or to whom he desires to dedicate everything, or whose servant he desires to become, look at HIM properly. Before being asked to select a proper groom bride is supposed to have considered the issue thoroughly.

Let us see how the expressions of Shri Rukminiji, at the time of her abduction, narrated in the second half of the tenth canto of Shrimad Bhagavata throws light on the topic under consideration.

का त्वा मुकुन्द महती कुलशीलरूपविद्यावयोद्रविणधामभिरात्मतुल्यम् ।
धीरा पतिं कुलवती न वृणीत कन्या काले नृसिंहं नरलोकमनोभिरामम् ॥

kaa tvaa Mukunda mahatee kulasheelarupa-
vidyavayodravindhamabhiraamatulaym, /
dheera patim kulvatee na vrineeta kanyaa
kaale Nrisimha naralokmanobhiraamam. //

Bhagavata 10-52-38

The meaning of the said verse is : " A bride should select her spouse after considering the character, education, age, valour etc. of the contender for her hand. One has to evaluate the fact whether the aspiring groom has the propriety to enhance the splendour and elegance of the girl who offers her life to him. She should not leave her fate in the hands of a person with ape- like habits. Is it not true that a blossoming flower however beautiful it may be, will be shredded of its petals in the hands of a monkey? Therefore this delicate, flower-like girl

should put her destiny on the strong shoulders of scholastic person. Only a strong and educated person can, on the strength of his power and knowledge, offer divine enlightenment and carry her to the heights of resplendence".

Similarly, a *jivatman* also should know that the divinity for whose shelter he is aspiring, is capable of liberating such a deprived soul like his. As long as we do not gain a firm faith in the capability of *Paramatman*, it cannot be said that our devotion has reached its full productivity. Shri Krishna has said in the Gita "श्रद्धावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः / 6.47 (*shraddhhaavaan bhajate yo Maam sa Me yuktatamo matah*)" *Bhakti* cannot be fulfilled in the absence of faith or trust." In order to generate trust the very picture of divinity has to be brought before a *jivatma*.

Svarupajnana or knowledge of the form of divinity is relayed through the following three words, viz. "भगवते कृष्णाय श्रीगोपीजनवल्लभाय" (*Bhagavate Krishnaaya ShriGopijanavallabhaaya*). When both the parties have given their consent to the alliance, the date for performance of marriage is fixed and propitiation of the planets will be started. Along with the chanting of *Veda mantras*, oblations will be offered. With the presenting of *shriphala* or sanctified coconut along with ghee as final oblation of "*Poornahuti*", the procedure of *grahashanti* will be completed. Similarly, all those material objects, which a *jiva* takes for granted, out of ignorance, as belonging to him, should be surrendered at the feet of the divine being, with the chanting of the following mantra. "देहेन्द्रिय-दाराऽऽगार-आत्मना सह समर्पयामि" (*dehendriya - daraagaara - aatmanaa saha samaprayaami*). Upto the phrase "वित्तेहपराणि" (*vitteha paraani*) all other oblations will be offered. And in the end by making the promise viz. "आत्मना सह समर्पयामि" (*aatmanaa saha samarpayaami*) the devotee with a *shriphala* in his hand offers the final oblation before the divinity. Thereafter, at the auspicious moment the bride's hand will be given into the hands of the groom. In this final offering the bride accepts the ownership of her husband. So also here in this initiation the *Jiva* uses the words, "दासोऽहम्"

"*daso'aham*" to indicate the sovereignty of the Divinity. *Jiva* repeats: "He Krishna ! I am your servant."

Even poet Dayaramji has conveyed the same sentiments in the following verse : "आप स्वामी सदा हुं दासरे, ए नातो रे निभावो रे" *aap swamee sada hun dasare. e naato re nibhaavo re* :

Meaning : "Oh ! Prabhu. I am no longer a rich man, nor do I belong to a high family, nor do I possess knowledge, nor have I any power left. In all respects you are my Master. And all that belongs to me is Yours."

In this manner the supernatural contact between *jivaatman* and *Paramaatman* takes place.

In short, *Brahmasambandha* means bringing an end to the egoistic tendencies and it also attempts to establish contact with the Supreme spirit. Instead of all material objects one has to count only that Supreme Being as his own and maintain that *Bhagavan* is mine and I belong to HIM. Thus one has to plant a seed of affectionate emotions in one's heart. This is known as *Brahmasambandha*. Thus the answer to the first question is completed.

In the tradition of '*Pushti*' it is contended that without receiving *Brahmasambandha* it is not possible to realise that '*rasatmaka*' or embodiment of sentiments', Shri Krishna. Like the relationship between a large black bee and a lotus flower, this *atma* and *Paramatma* are right from the beginning interrelated. But as long as the lotus is closed in the night the black bee cannot enter it. Benevolent rays of the sun are required to allow the bee to enter the petals of a lotus. The hearts of *daivi jivas* are like this lotus flower. Unless and until the lotus-like heart of a devotee is not awakened to the pangs of separation, through the compassion of Shri Mahaprabhuji, whose touch is like the touch of the resplendent rays of the sun it will remain closed in the darkness of ignorance. When the agony generated from separation spreads in the heart of a devotee, the deep sentiments will blossom into affection and at

that time the 'embodiment of sentiment' *Rassatmak Poorna Purushottam* will manifest therein.

It is quite evident that even though a *jiva* is *daivi*, yet as long as he does not recognise the *Svarupa* or form of *Bhagavan* and the *svarupa* of his own self, it will not be possible for him to achieve those sentiments relating to Divinity. To achieve this it is very essential to eradicate ignorance and then obtain knowledge about the form of *Brahman*.

Brahmasambandha will enable us to get the knowledge of the form of *Bhagavan* and eligibility to the servitude done with one's body' wealth in which the mind is engrossed. This servitude is characterised by the form which grants the sweetness of the *roop* of *Bhagavan* full of *rasa*, affection, full of the emotion of sweetness. This *seva* is viz., physical worship, worship through monetary means and spiritual or mental worship, whereby a *jivatman* gets the knowledge of his belonging to *Bhagavan*. When he advances in devotion he will develop those sentiments of agony etc.

At this moment the state through which we pass, is devoid of the feelings of agony. We are all bereft of this particular sentiment though we are separated from the Divine Being. This is so because we have forgotten the chief facts of life, like :- "Who am I? Wherefrom have I emerged? What is my duty? Where will I go from here?"

Due to the influence of *Maya*, even though a *jiva* is a part of the Divine Being, he is enwrapped in ignorance and identifies himself as father and mother, or brother and sister or that he is a master. He has forgotten that the Divine Being is an '*Amshi*' or having parts and that he is an "*amsha*" or part thereof. "Prabhu is my master and I am HIS servant; I solely belong to HIM. And HE belongs to me."

All this knowledge can be gained only through the grace of *Acharyacharana* and through *seva* which projects deep sentiments of devotion with emotions. But even the '*gati*' or movement in *seva* can be achieved when he obtains the

'*adhikara*' or claim for it. And this sole right to render *seva* can be offered to a *sevak* or servant. If a person assumes the role of a *seth* he will not be able to hope to receive *seva*. Great business magnates may be attending the courts of rulers. But service is offered to only *sevaks*. All the rest of the elite will be sitting according to their protocol. But a person who is designate as servant will sit at the feet of his master. His duty is to obey the commands and serve.

If the '*Sevak*', instead of carrying out the orders, desires a seat for himself and attempts to usurp the position of his Master, and tries to impose his authority on all the objects that belong to his Master, then will it not be said that the '*Sevakdharma*' or the customary conduct of a servant is reversed? Is it not a great offence against this '*Sevakdharma*'?

In this manner, having been under the gravity of accumulated offences, committed for thousands of years. *Jiva* has no energy left to approach and make entreaties for forgiveness(*kshama*). We observe in worldly affairs that a child commits great offences but, instead of approaching his father for forgiveness, he will go to his mother. Out of sheer compassionate nature she will, whatever be the conduct of her children, advance to forgive the misbehaviour, however immense it may be, when her child, with tears in its eyes reaches her in fear of punishment. She will also arrange for the forgiveness from her husband.

In a similar way, even though a *Jiva* susceptible to immense offences, if he receives '*Bhagavadsharanagati*' or shelter from the Divine Being through the grace of Shrimad Vallabhacharya, then even the Divinity will forgive all kinds of offences of the *jiva*.

Shri Vallabhacharya has stated in his work called '*Yamunashtakam*' about the forbearing nature of '*Yamunaji*' as follows :- "यमोऽपि भगिनीसुतान् कथमु हन्ति दुष्टानपि" (*Yamo'pi bhaginisutaan kathamu hanti dushtaanapi*). Therefore, since Shrimad Acharyaji is considered to be the very form of Shri

Svaminiji, the Divine Being will certainly forgive the 'Sevakas' of Shri Vallabhacharya. Shri Acharya has stated in another work of his called "Navaratna" as follows :-

चिन्ता काऽपि न कार्या निवेदितात्मभिः कदापीति ।

भगवानपि पुष्टिस्थो न करिष्यति लौकिकीं च गतिम् ॥ --(नवरत्न)

Chintaa kaapi na kaarya niveditaatmbahih kadaapeeti /
Bhagavaanapi Pushtistho na karishyati laukikeem cha gatim //
 (Navratna)

This means that since the Divinity HIMSELF is in 'pushti' (a state of compassion) HE is bound to offer shelter to the *jiva* who has been initiated into *Brahmasambandha* through Shri Acharyaji. And when once he accepts such a *Jiva*, He will never leave the hand of that *jiva*. Soon after establishing, *Brahmasambandha* the relationship of master and servant will be automatically effected.

Thereafter the duty of the servant will be to render worship at the feet of his master. But at any time even if the servant fails to fulfil his duties, the master will never reject such a servant, because after becoming a servant a *jiva* is considered to be belonging to *Bhagavan*.

From the above discussion it becomes evident that, in order to obtain entry to the path of 'Pushti' and for performing the service to the Divine Being there is absolute necessity of the initiation of *Brahmasambandha*.

THE SECRET OF SELF-DEDICATION :

A *Jiva* is separated from the Divinity, even though he is a part of the Divinity. Ever since he has separated he has come under the influence of *Maya* etc., and the identity with his body and other organs of senses has been established. He has completely forgotten that he is a part of the Divinity. Out of sheer ignorance he identifies himself either as man or woman.

In such circumstances, in order to bring back such *jivas* to *Brahman*, only those who, either belong to the Divine Being or those who represent that form of the Divinity, will be able to do so.

Therefore, in *Vallabhasampradaya* or tradition many of the deeds performed with a view to pleasing the Divinity, are effected in the name of Shri Acharyaji. Even in the service to the Divinity the same idea is continuous. Why is it so? Because only those experienced persons can make others realise those spiritual and religious emotions. In this *sampradaya*, the initiation of *Brahmasambandha* is not given by any particular person, but only Shri Acharyashri inducts one in it. It is only through the Acharyaji that the Divine Being accepts a *jiva* into the path of *Pushti* and *Bhagavan* accepts the service of such a *jiva*.

In worldly conduct influence plays a great role in the life of men. If a person desires to approach any influential person he needs acquaintances. These acquaintances will carry him to such people of recognition. Otherwise he will be stopped outside.

In order to reach the Divine Being there can be no other acquaintance than Shri *Acharyacharana*. In this context we refer to a beautiful instance from the legend of Ramananda of Thaneshwar, obtained from '*Chaurasi vaishnavani varta*'. At one time Shrimad Vallabhacharyashri, along with his *sevakas*, visited the house of one Ramananda Pandit in Thaneshwar. When everyone was asleep at night, Ramananda asked his wife to hide all the dry cakes of dung so that the accompanying *vaishnavas* may not steal them in the morning. This Acharyashri heard. He thought "This is such a queer person that he considers *vaishnavas* who are dearest to *Bhagavan* as thieves, treats them as thieves. *Bhagavan* will forgive all other offences but He will not forgive those who offend His beloved *Vaishnavas*. I will not stay any longer in this person's house because he calls *Vaishnavas* thieves". So deciding he called

Ramananda near him and said;" You have committed an offence against *Bhagavan* and also against *Vaishnavas* by calling them thieves. Therefore I will not stay further in your house. I will leave the village at once." So saying Acharyashri moved on to another place along with the group of his disciples.

Ramananda became very unhappy because his *Guru* was angry. It gave him intolerable agony when his *Guru* discarded him. If *Bhagavan* is angry the *Guru* will attempt to please HIM by entreaties. But if the *Guru* becomes angry who will try to pacify him? Due to such unbearable mental strain he turned imprudent. Gradually he lost everything. But by the grace of *Bhagavan* he never touched any object that had not been offered to the Divinity.

Thereafter, one day Ramananda purchased some juicy 'jalebi' (A sweet preparation) and holding his hands high offered them to Shrinathji requesting HIM to accept the same. That very moment far away, Shri Acharyaji place 'Rajabhoga' (mid-day offerings) before Shrinathji. But when he saw 'jalebi' in HIS hands he asked the latter how HE got it when he (Acharyashri) had not offered the same. Shrinathji answered " This is offered to Me by Ramananda Pandit whom you have discarded". Then Acharyacharan again asked :- "How can You accept a *jiva* when I have discarded him?" Then Shrinathji, reminding him of the promise HE had made, said :- "I have given you a promise on the mid-night of the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of 'Shravana' that whosoever is offered to ME through the initiation of *Brahmasambandha* by you, I will never discard him. Now tell Me how I leave Ramananda ?" On hearing this from the Divine speech of Shrinathji the *Acharya* became very highly pleased.

From this illustration it is fully established how significant the initiation of *Brahmasambandha* is. This answers the doubts of those who ask about the necessity to receive *Brahmasambandha*.

The third question that arises before us is about the status of the sacrament of *Brahmasambandha* before the advent of Shri Vallabhacharya. Was it in vogue during these five hundred years only or can it be said that it existed even before that period? Or is it a creation of mind alone?

The sacrament of *Brahmasambandha* is established long before. Even during Vedic periods a reference can be observed about the initiation of *Brahmasambandha*. *Brahmasambandha* means dedicating one's own self or what may be said as the ultimate resort of *Atman* in Divine Being. It is the same as 'Sharnagati' of which one will find a reference in Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayana, ShrimadBhagavata, Shrimad Bhagavad-gita etc.,

In the seventh section of Shrimad Bhagavata Prahladji states :-

“श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनम्

अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनम्”

*Shravanam keertanam Vishnoh smranam padasevanam
archanam vandanam daasyam sakhyamaatmanivedanam.*

(Bhag.7-5-23)

At the end of this verse there is a mention about "Atmanivedana" or surrender of soul. This word here represents *Brahmasambandha* alone. As long as surrender of one's own self does not take place one cannot say that 'Bhakti' or devotion achieves its fulfilment. In the eighth skandha of Bhagavata the same dedication of soul can be observed. When the demon king (Danavapati) Bali has become unable to fulfil the promise he has given, on the orders of *Bhagavan*, Bali is tied down by the noose of Varuna (*Varunapasha*). Bali's consort Vindhyavali sings in the praise of Bhagavan :-

क्रीडार्थमात्मन इदम्.....”

Kreedarthamaatmana idam'

(Bhag.8-22-24)

Meaning : "O *Bhagavan* ! All this belongs to You. Nothing relates to us. What we have considered as belonging to us, in truth, is due to our ignorance."

It means that King Bali thought that whatever had accumulated through his efforts should be surrendered to the Divinity. Then that all left except his own soul. To speak the truth, of all the material objects what is it that belongs to us so that we can offer it to the Divine Being? Only those persons offer in charity when they have something to give. Whatever we claim as belonging to us, including our own soul, in reality belongs to Divinity.

One will find support of this statement of Vindhyavali from the following words of Prahladji :-

त्वयैव दत्तं पदमैन्द्रमूर्जितं हृतं तदेवाद्य तथैव शोभनम् ।

मन्ये महानस्य कृतो ह्यनुग्रहो विभ्रंशितो यच्छ्रिय आत्ममोहनात् ॥

Tvayaiva dattam padamaindramoorjitam hrutam tadevaadya

tathaiva shobhanam

manye mahaanasya kruto hyanugraho vibhramshito

yachchhriya aatmamohanaat

(Bhag. 8-22-16)

"Oh ! Divine Being ! You have given us all these material prosperities. And today, by taking them away once again You have granted us our welfare, and shattered our fallacies. We consider this act as a gracious deed performed to show your kindness on us".

Accepting this contention even King Bali states :-

यद्युत्तमश्लोक भवान्मेमरितं वचोव्यलीकंसुरवर्य मन्यते ।

करोम्यृतं तन्न भवेत् प्रलम्भनं पदं तृतीयं कुरु शीर्ष्णि मे निजम् ।

*Yadyuttamashloka bhavaanmameritam vacho vyaleekam
suravarya manyate /*

*Karomyrutam tanna bhavet pralambhanam Padam trutiyam
kuru sheershni me nijam //*

(Bhag. 8-22-2)

Meaning : "Oh Divine Being ! You have taken all those things which I believed lay within my powers. Now nothing seems left that I may consider to belong to me. Even then I find one single object about which I may still say, out of the influence of *maya* within, that it is in my power to offer. Then why shall I attempt to claim any right upon it ? Oh *Bhagavan* ! now take me into your shelter completely. Just as you have placed your protective hand on the head of my grandfather, so also please place your third step on my head.

पदं तृतीयं कुरु शीर्ष्णि मे निजम् ।

Padam trutiyam kuru sheershni me nijam /

In the same manner, in the ninth Skandha of Bhagavata, *Bhagavan* HIMSELF explains to sage Durwasa the secrets of "Aatmanivedanam" or dedication of one's own self.

ये दाराऽऽगारपुत्राप्तान् प्राणान् वित्तमिमं परम् ।

हित्वा मां शरणं याताः कथं तांस्त्यक्तुमुत्साहे ॥

Ye daaraagaaraputraptaan praanaan vittamimam param /

hitvaa Maam sharanam yaataah katham taanstyaktuymutsahe //

(Bhag. 9-4-65)

It means, "How can I reject him when he has surrendered at my feet, his son, wife, relations and everything and has come unto Me for ultimate shelter?"

This same *Brahmasambandha*, which is a form of asking for the shelter of the Divinity through means of self-surrender, is established by "the crowning glory or love" i.e. the Gopis of Vraj before their beloved Krishna :-

तन्नः प्रसीद वृजिनार्दन तेऽङ्घ्रिमूल-

प्राप्ता विसृज्य वसतीस्त्वदुपासनाशाः ॥

त्वत्सुन्दरस्मितनिरीक्षणतीव्रकाम-

तप्तात्मनां पुरुषभूषण देहि दास्यम् ॥

Tannah praseeda Vrujinaardana Téngghrimula-

Praaptaa visrujya vasteestvadupaasanaashaah

Tvatsundarasmitanireekshanateevrakaama-

taptaatmanaam purushabhushana dehi daasyam

(Bhag-10-29-38)

Here by asking Shri Krishna to grant them eternal servitude in HIS service in the words-

“पुरुषभूषण देहि दास्यम्”

Purushabhushana dehi daasyam

they are proving the said principle of final resort through *Brahmasambandha*.

OBTAINING OF SHELTER BY VIBHISHANA

Just as one can find in Bhagvad-Geeta and Upanishads instances of obtaining final assylum in the form of self-surrender, so also one will observe the said principle established in Ramayana.

When Vibhishana leaves the camp of Ravana and surrenders himself at the feet of *Bhagavan* Shri Rama, a question comes to the fore. Vibhishana belongs to the enemy camp. And he is the brother of Ravana, King of Lanka. In the circumstances can one trust him? It is also possible that he may have been sent for the purpose of espionage. Everyone has been raising such questions regarding Vibhishana when *Bhagavan* Shri Rama comes there and states in a firm voice."

सकृदेव प्रपन्नाय तवास्मीति च याचते ।

Sakrudeva Prapannaya tavaasmeeti cha Yaachate.

Here these two words viz. : "*prapannaya*" and "*tavasmi*" indicate the said principle of '*Sharanagati*' through *Brahmasambandha*.

By looking into all the evidences it is established that this principle of sacrament or *Brahmasambandha* is not any offshoot or a derivative concept but is the utmost reality which has been described in different forms in *shastras* like Vedas etc. Shri Vallabhacharya, in his work known as "*Siddhantarahasyam*" has frankly stated-

साक्षात् भगवता प्रोक्तं तदक्षरश उच्यते ।

Saakshaat Bhagavataa proktam tadakshrasha uchyate /

There is no possibility of entertaining the thought of this being a figment of imagination. On a perusal of all the doctrines it appears that the principle of *Brahmasambandha* has been established in a subtle form in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Gita, the Ramayana etc.

WHAT IS THE SECRET OF THE MANTRA :

"SHRI KRIHSNA SHARANAM MAMA'?

Before receiving the sacrament of *Brahmasambandha*, the eight syllabled *mantra* known as "Asthakshara Mantra" i.e. "SHRI KRISHNAH SHARNAM MAMA" is pronounced three times. Let us consider the reasons here.

According to the statement of Acharyashri, Shri Krishna is none other than '*Paramatman*' or '*Brahman*' or the embodiment of "*Satchidananda*". HE is devoid of all blemishes (*doshas*).

कृष्णात् परं नास्ति दैवं वस्तुतो दोषवर्जितम् ।

Krushnaat param naasti daivam vastuto doshavarjitam.

(Antahkaranaprabodha, 1).

All the other objects of the world contain blemishes. As long as these blemishes or drawbacks are not cast aside how can union be effected between a person with blemishes and the Supreme Being Who is blemishless? Is there any device by means of which a *Jiva* can be made free from blemishes and made to reach the Divine Being?

A similar apprehension has been expressed by the great devotee Vidurji. He asked Uddhavji, who was an intimate associate of *Bhagavan* Shri Krishna, as follows, "O Uddhava ! please tell me whether there is any being in this whole universe, under whose shelter all the 'adhi' or mental agonies, 'vyadhi' or all ailments and 'upadhi' or the limitations of life can be eradicated completely?" In answer Uddhavji said :

अहो वकी यं स्तनकालकूटं जिधांसयापाययदप्यसाध्वी ।
लेभे गतिं धात्र्युचितां ततोऽन्यं कं वा दयालुं शरणं व्रजेम ॥
Aho bakee yam stanakaalakutam
jighaansayaapaayayadapyasaadhvi /
lebhe gatim dhaatryuchitam tato'nyam kam vaa
dayalum sharanam vrajema //

(Bhag. 3-2-23)

This suggests :- 'There is none other in this whole universe like *Bhagavan* Shri Krishna, who, without considering the evil or the good will be anxious to benefit those devotees who come to HIM for shelter. Therefore HE is called "*Prapanna Paarijaata*".

The Divine Being has uttered words about granting fearlessness in various places in the *Bhagavad Gita*, promising assylum.

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

Sarvadharmaan parityajya Maamekam sharanam vraja
Aham tvaa sarvapaapebhyo mokshyaishyaami maa shuchah.
(*Bhagavada Gita 18-66*)

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।

मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥

Daivi hyesha gunamayee Mama maayaa duratyayaa
Maameva ye prapadyante maayaametaam taranti te,

(Bhag. Gita 7-14)

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।

तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

Ananyaashchintayanto Maam ye janaah paryupaasate /
Taeshamnityaabhiyuktaanaam yogakshemam vahaamyaham //
(Bhag.Gita9-22)

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।

स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥

Maam hi Paartha vyapaashritya y'episyuh paapayonayah
striyo vaishyaastathaa shudraaste'pi yanti paraam gatim
(Bhag.Gita 9-32)

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।

साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ॥

Api chetsuduraachaaro bhajate Maamananyabhaak /
saadhureva sa mantavyah samyagvyavasito hi sah //
(Bhag. Gita9-30)

ELIXIR CALLED SHELTER OF DIVINE BEING

When one goes through all the said verses of *Gita* it becomes evident that the Supreme Being takes *Jivas* under HIS shelter and graces them by HIS munificence. However guilty a

Jiva may be or whatever evil deeds he may have committed, yet it is obvious that as soon as he receives the shelter of *Bhagavan* Shri Krishna, he is transformed into a righteous person. "Saadhureva sa mantavyah".

In old times, rulers used to extend shelter to offenders and forgive all their offences even though they belonged to the enemy-camp. In a similar manner when a guilty *Jiva* reaches the feet of *Bhagavan* to receive HIS shelter, the Divine Being casts all the drawbacks of that *Jiva* aside. HE does so because of the inherent qualities in HIM viz., "Dayaa" or compassion, "Karunaa" or graciousness and "krupaa" or mercy.

THE ONLY DELIVERER OF JIVAS : SHRI KRISHNA

Acharyashri has enumerated the said statements in his work called "KRISHNASHRAYA" as follows :

अजामिलादिदोषाणां नाशकोऽनुभवे स्थितः ।

ज्ञापिताखिलमाहात्म्यः कृष्ण एव गतिर्मम ॥

Ajaamilaadidoshaanaam naashako'nubhave Sthitah /

Jnapitaakhilamaahaatmyah Krushna eva gatirmama //

Meaning : O Prabhu ! even a most evil-doer like Ajamila has been benefited when he came under YOUR shelter, how can it be that we will not be graced under YOUR protection? We will definitely receive it with a determination and conviction if we can repeat that Shri Krishna alone is our resort (Krishna eva gatir mama). Even in distressing periods like Kaliyuga, there is no other saviour of *Jivas* than HE. Only Bhagavan Shri Krishna is capable of offering us liberation from the vicious circle of life and death, destroying all our drawbacks. In Kaliyuga, except aspiring for the final shelter of Shri Krishna, there seems to be no other expedient to obtain that form of Divine Being.

In Upnishads it is preached about the ultimate resort Divinity (*Bhagavan*) in the following terms :-

यो ब्रह्माणं विदधाति पूर्व, यो वै वेदांश्च ग्रहिणोति तस्मै ।

तं ह देवमात्मबुद्धिप्रकाशं मुमुक्षुर्वै शरणमहं प्रपद्ये ॥

Yo Brahmaanam vidadhaati poorvam, Yo vai Vedaanshcha prahinoti Tasmai /

Tam ha devamaatmabuddhiprakasham mumukshurvai sharanam aham prapadye //

(Shvetashvataropanishad 6-18)

It is reiterated here that those who desire to accept the initiation of *Brahmasambandha* just before receiving the *mantra* have to recite "*Ashtaakshara mantra*" three times with an avowed intention of moving forward for the shelter of *Bhagavan*.

Shri Mahaprabhuji has sated about the beneficiary aspect of "*Ashtaakshara mantra*" in his work called "Navaratna" as follows :

तस्मात् सर्वात्मना नित्यं श्रीकृष्णः शरणं मम ।

वदद्भिरिव सततं स्थेयमित्येव मे मतिः ॥

Tasmaat sarvaatmanaa nityam Shri krushnah sharanam mama vadadbhireva satatam stheyamityeva me matih

(Navaratna Stotram)

ASHTAAKSHARA MANTRA IS KALPATARU OR WISH-FULFILLING TREE :

This mantra should be repeated constantly by all the devotees who desire to realise the nearness of Divinity. This *mantra* is called "*Kalpavruksha*". This mantra is capable of fulfilling all the longings of devotees. It is capable of offering worldly benefits and also other higher worldly (spiritual) munificences. All the accomplishments of the world lie at the

feet of *Bhagavan* and they are under His control. It is not impossible to achieve these accomplishments for those who have received the grace of the Divine being and who perpetually remain under HIS protection. *Ashtakshara mantra* thus establishes the fact of taking shelter in HIM.

Shri Prabhucharanji (Gosainji), showing compassion for the suffering *Jivas*, has explained the meaning of the syllables of this mantra as follows:-

- 1) "Shri" श्री : When a *Jiva* utters this syllable he will achieve blessedness and will also obtain both, worldly and other worldly benefits;
- (2) "Kru" कृ : by pronouncing this syllable one will bring an end to his sins;
- (3) "Shnah" णः : this syllable will keep the three-fold afflictions at a distance.
- (4) "Sha" श : this will grant freedom from the cycle of birth and death.
- (5) "Ra" र : this gives an insight into the spiritual sports (*lilas*) of *Bhagavan* together with an understanding of the form of *Guru*.
- (6) "Nam" नमः : this will give birth to firm and unique devotion in the heart of a devotee;
- (7) "Ma" म : this will encourage deep and ardent love in the devotees for '*Vraj*' and also for the *guru* who brightens the knowledge about the form of Divinity;
- (8) "Ma" म : this will help in obtaining "*Sayujya*" or the intimate union with Shri Hari.

Thus this eight-syllabled mantra turns out to be the giver of all accomplishments. Since this is a Unique *mantra* it will first assist the *jiva* in reaching the shelter of Divine Being and thereafter obtaining freedom from all blemishes.

THE PATH FOR THE REMOVAL OF THREE FOLD BLEMISHES

This *Mantra* is pronounced three times because the blemishes or drawbacks of *Jiva* are threefold :

(1) "*Kayika*" or physical, (2) "*Vachika*" or pertaining to speech or verbal and (3) "*Manasika*" or related to mind or spiritual. Let us take an illustration of the case of celibate person (*Brahmachari*). He takes the vow of maintaining celibacy. He may maintain purity by his actions but he may be depraved (*bhrashta*) by his thoughts. In those circumstances it is said that he has broken his vow. Religious austerities (*Vrata*) like celibacy etc., should be maintained physically, verbally and spiritually.

Similarly, in the conduct of worship of the Divine Being three kinds of offences are observed. You may be rendering worship physically, but if your mind is entangled in worldly affairs it is said that such *Seva* is not complete.

In the "*Vartas*", there is an episode about one Kandas Sheth. At one time this Sheth was engaged in the worship of *Bhagavan*. He was engrossed in bedecking or adorning the '*Swarupa*' with jewels. But at the same time he entertained other thoughts in his mind. In the meantime someone knocked at the door and asked whether the Sheth was at home. Downstairs the Sheth's daughter-in-law was engaged in household work. She replied that her father-in-law was not at home and that he was at the cobbler's place.

It is clear from this episode that it is not enough to devote oneself to *Seva* physically. But harmony between mind and speech is also expected. Only then the service will be fully imbued with love.

THE ENGROSSMENT OF GOPIS IN DIVINITY

In '*Raasa Panchaadhyaayi*' of Shrimad Bhaagavata Shri Shukdevji has explained the same aspect, describing the state of Gopis therein as :-

“तन्मनस्कास्तदालापास्तद्विचेष्टास्तदात्मिकाः”

Tanmanaskaastadaalaapaastadvicheshtaastadaatmikaah

(Bhag.10-30-44)

When all the activities of Gopis had converged into a single thought or concentration of mind, body and speech in Divine Being, then only could they sing the song known as "GOPIGEET"

When a *jiva* keeps himself away from the contact of all material objects, only can he witness the rise of absolute love in his inner self. When the inner self is turned away from all modifications the sentiment of devotion towards *Bhagavan* is manifested. If a person goes on prattling about material achievements he is bound to produce depravities in his mind. If a person goes on repeating the name of *Bhagavan* constantly he gets addicted to it.

Thus the physical, verbal and mental approaches form the prominent means of devotion. Had Gopis not combined a state of devotion with a concentration of speech and mind along with intense physical approach they would not have achieved success.

From the above statements it is evident that a *Jiva* commits threefold faults viz. physical, verbal and mental. In order to provide the removal of these faults the "Ashtakshara Mantra" is recited three times. After this Mantra has been recited three times the Mantra of *Brahmasambandha* is allowed to be repeated. On the eleventh day of the bright half of the *Bharatiya* calender month *Shravana*, *Shri Govardhannathji* manifested Himself at midnight at 'Thakurani Ghat' in Gokul and said to *Shri Mahaprabhuji*, "If you deliver any *Jiva* to ME through the means of this Mantra I will not cast that *Jiva* away at any time".

BRAHMASAMBANDHA : THE GREAT MANTRA

This Mantra consists of five syllables viz., "Oh Krishna, I am Thine." The remaining part of the Mantra is only a commentary on the said Mantra. In this "Panchakshara Mantra"

(five syllabled *mantra*) there are three words viz., (1) Krishna (2) thine and (3) 'I am.' In the first instance a comment is made on the words "I am." People should think about themselves and analyse what they are or they should consider their state or condition. Therefore a comment is made on this word first.

SECRET OF BRAHMASAMBANDHA

Jivas have been separated from Divinity for thousands of years and they experience the pangs of disunion. The same has been clarified in Upanishads as:

स एकाकी न रमते । स द्वितीयमैच्छत् । तदात्मानं स्वयमकुरुत् ।
एकोऽहं बहु स्याम् । यथान्नेः क्षुद्राः विस्फुलिङ्गाः व्युच्चरन्ति ।

Sa ekaki na ramate. Sa dvitiyamaichchhat. Tadaatmaanam swayamakuruta.

Eko'ham bahu syaam. Yathagneh kshudraah visphulingaah vyuchcharanti.

This means that in the beginning there was only *Brahman*. Thereafter It desired that It should transform Itself into many forms. According to the statements from *Shrimad Bhagvata* viz.,

क्रीडार्थमात्मन इदं त्रिजगत्कृतं ते ।
स्वाम्यं तु तत्र कुधियोऽपर ईश कुर्युः ॥

*Kreedarthmatman idam trijagatkritam te /
Swamyam tu tatra kudhiyo'para Isha kuryuh //*

(Bhaagavata 8-22-20)

When *Brahman* desired to indulge into sport, for its sport alone It effected the creation of *Jivas*.

“तदात्मानं स्वयमकुरुत्”

Tadaatmaanam Swayamakuruta. (T.U. 2-7)

At the time of separation from *Bhagavan*, *Jiva* had the form of the three ingredients *Sat*, *Chit* and *Ananda* but later on he came under the influence of *Maya*. When he was enveloped by a curtain of physical internal organs (Mind, perception or (*Buddhi*) consciousness or *Chit* and egoism or *Ahankara*), he became devoid of knowledge of self and remained aware of

physical consciousness only on account of this physical consciousness he acquired worldly bondages. He has come to be known as one who undergoes the joys and sorrows of life. Gradually he forgot his own original form. He even forgot his Master, the Divinity.

With a view to expressing the fact that a *Jiva* has, in this manner, been separated and that ages have passed away, the words "सहस्रपरिवत्सर" *Sahasra Parivatsara* have been used meaning "for thousands of years".

DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIVINITY AND JIVA

Now we deal with that aspect of *Brahmasambandha* wherein a direct relationship is established between the *Jiva* and Shri Krishna who is full of Rasa and HIMSELF is Parabrahman. In other words the relation is established with Poorna Purushottam Shri Krishna who is endowed with all the sixteen digits.

Krishna represents complete incarnation (*Poornavatari*). This has been established both in Bhagavadgeeta and Shrimad Bhagavata. In all the incarnations (*Avataras*) through which Brahman has manifested Himself on this earth, some of them are '*Kalavataras*' or incarnations of digits, some are '*Gunavataras*' or incarnations in quality and some again are '*Amshavataras*' or partial incarnations. But according to the statement from Shrimad Bhagavatam 1-3-28 viz., "एते चांशकलाः पुंसः कृष्णस्तु भगवान् स्वयम्" (*Ete chanshakalaah Pumsah Krusnastu Bhagavaan Swayam*.) It is asserted that HE who is full or complete is called "*Poornavataras*" or incarnation in full. For example there is only one moon. On the first day called '*pratipada*' it appears in one part or '*kala*'; on the second day with two parts, and the day on which it appears with all parts it is called '*Poornima*' or the full moon. So also the incarnation of '*Nrusinha*' or half-man and half-lion is considered to consist of four digits. This means the Divinity has manifested only four '*Kalas*'. In the incarnation of Rama the Divine Being has

Manifested fifteen '*Kalas*'. But in the incarnation of Krishna He has appeared with all the sixteen '*Kalas*'.

SHRIKRISHNA OR HARI FULL OF ABSOLUTE BLISS

It is described in '*Shastras*' that the '*Swarupa*' or form of Shri Krishna consists of infinite Bliss. Even the powers of expression of the Vedas have failed to measure the quality of HIS Blissfulness and have pronounced the words "*Neti Neti*" - "It is not that, it is not that", because no one has the power to describe the complete form of Divinity. The '*Swarupa*' of Bhagavan Shri Krishna is complete or '*Poorna*'. Along with that HE is independent. Therefore HE is free from all the bondages either wordly or Vedic. For this reason even the meanest person can hope to aspire for the protection of Divinity and thereby achieve the highest welfare. To assure this here the word "*Krishnaya*" is used.

THE SENTIMENT OF SEVA IN PUSHTI :

In the traditions of *Pushtimarga seva* or worship is of two kinds. One is performed with "*Vatsalya bhava*" or sentiment of affection and the other with "*Madhurya bhava*" or sentiment of sweetness or pleasantness. Shrimad Acharyacharana has stated : "द्विवार्षिकोऽयं बालकः" (*Dwivaarshikòyam Baalakah*). In the daily conduct of affairs also it is observed that a woman expresses her deep sentiment of love for her husband or for her son. In *Pushti Sampradaya* worship or *Seva* is done with the undercurrent of emotions of a woman. It is not possible to offer *seva* with predominant emotions of man, because --

हुं भाव पुं भाव न्योछावर करीने
श्री गिरिधरजीने वरजो हो जी रे

*Hum Bhaava, pum bhaava nyochavara karine,
Shree Giridharaji ne varajo ho ji re.*

According to this contention of Shri Dayaramji, at the onset of the emotions pertaining to a man, a person will develop a kind of ego or conceit known as "*Ahankara*". Therefore, a person should abandon this emotion called "*Hum bhava*" or ego and "*Pum bhava*" or emotions of masculinity and place everything at the feet of Shri Govardhanadharana. Secondly, with the expression of masculine emotions the scope for entertaining a permanent sentiment love becomes restricted, whereas for a female it is natural to entertain feelings of feebleness and love. As long as a person will not abandon his ego and adopt humbleness and render worship till then it is not possible to establish the sentiment of love in his heart. This emotion called love or affection can take a firm place in the heart only where sentiments of tenderness and artlessness or candidness prevail. How can this delicate emotion of love hope to survive where hard feelings are entertained and where the heart is filled with deceit and passions?. This sentiment known as love is sweet; whereas the emotion called conceit is caustic or saltish. Everyone knows that an excessive use of corrosive substances will destroy glossiness of body. In a similar way the awakening of the sentiment of ego (*Ahankar*) in the heart will destroy that delicate emotion called love.

Since the entertainment of masculine sentiments will naturally lead to egoistic temperaments it is avoided where "*Madhura Bhakti*" or devotion with mellifluous sentiments is concerned. The twin sentiments of humbleness and love are obtained from the female emotions. *Bhakti* or devotion is a device for all those *Daivi Jivas* who are devoid of all means.

With the appearance of masculine emotions the attitudes of "*Purushaartha*" or fulfilling the objects of human life will be-

come very strong. But for a woman everything centres round her spouse. On considering all these facts it becomes evident that it is very essential to hold the sentiments of a female in Seva or worship; and of the various delicate female emotions of devotion prominence is given to the emotions of "*Vatsalya*" or affection and "*Madhurya*" or love.

COMBINATION OF AFFECTION AND LOVE

With a view to materializing the accomplishment of the sentiments of affection and love and for sowing the seeds of both of them two words are given here viz., "*Krishnaya Shri Gopijanavallabhaya*". The word "*Krishna*" nourishes the sentiment of affection and the other word "*Shri Gopijanavallabha*" sustains the other sentiment of love (*Madhurya Bhava*). Or one may say that the word "*Krishna*" fosters dissociation or separation (*Viprayoga*), whereas the word "*Shri Gopijanavallabha*" implies the sentiment of union (*Samyoga*), because in our cult the word "*Shri*" denotes "*Swamini*" or the female counterpart of *Bhagavan*. The word "*Shri*" is not used before the word "*Krishna*". This is done to establish the emotion of separation.

The culminating state of union takes place from the emergence of the sentiment of love. For this reason the use of the word "*Gopijanavallabha*" is made. Because the fulfilment of the sentiment of love of gopijana is the most pre-eminent stage and this can be achieved through the grace of Gopis alone, therefore it is reiterated here that the words "*Shri gopijana Vallabhaya*" are mentioned therein.

Now let us discuss the meaning of the word "*tava*" or yours. After understanding the "*Swarupas*" or forms of *Jiva* and Divinity one has to attempt to bring an end to the "*Sansara*" or world of *Jiva* which is full of "*Ahanta*" or ego and "*Mamata*" or

mineness. As long as our inclination remains attached to wordly objects how can we develop devotion towards Divinity?

There are four "*Adhyasas*" or false superimpositions that misguide one from the true paths of human life. The first is "*Dehadhyasa*" or the superimposition of body on Atman; the second is "*Indriyadhyasa*" or the superimposing of sense organs on Atman; the third is "*Pranadhyasa*" or the super imposition of mental feelings done by *Pranas* on Atman; and lastly "*Antahkaranadhyasa*" or the superimposition of *Antahkarana* on the Atman.

An "*Adhyasa*" is something that makes one forget the true nature of objects and draws out the knowledge about things that are not real.

Let us first explain *dehadhyasa*. Someone says, "I am tall." Some other says, "I am small." Another says, "I am short." Yet another says, "I am very fat." or "I am thin". But in fact *Atma* is neither fat, nor thin, nor tall nor small, Even then when such ignorance prevails it is called "*dehadhyasa*". In this world we come across many people who are either one-eyed, or blind etc., but to speak the truth *Atma* does not consist of such defects like strabismus (*squint*), deafness, lameness, blindness or dumbness. But still out of sheer ignorance we repeat that :- "I am black", "I am fair", and so on. So this is called "*indriyaadhyasa*".

In order to get out of this mire we have to dedicate all those objects that are at the root of ignorance.

Here by using the word "*deha*" or body we mean that object which is the outcome of the combination of the five elements called "*Pancha maha bhutani*" and those five subtle

elements called "*Panchatanmatras*". *Indriyas* represent the five "*Jnanendriyas*" or organs of perception and the five "*Karmendriyas*" or the organs of action. The word "*pranah*" consists of the five vital airs called- *prana*, *apana* etc. "*Antahkarana*" represents "*manas*" or mind, "*Buddhi*" intelligence, "*chitta*" Consciousness and "*Ahankara*" egoism. Thus all the twenty four elements described in Sankhya along with their functions are dedicated to the Divine Being.

Uptill now we have discussed about body, organs of senses, vital airs called *prana* and conscience or *antahkarana* and about their attributes. Now clarification is made about the dedication of the objects that represent worldly longings or possessiveness viz.. दारागारपुत्राप्तवित्तेहपराणि *Daaragaaraputraaptavitteha paraani* wife, or husband, home, son, acquaintances, wealth, the wordly interests and other worldly longings. Here the word "*Dara*" means one's wife but when it is the woman who receives consecration it should be taken as husband.

In a way, the moment a *Jiva* takes birth he is enveloped by the worldly attachments, but especially after marriage he is engulfed in worldly matters.

HOW CAN THIS INTOXICATION OF WORLDLINESS BE AVOIDED ?

Marriage brings a sort of intoxication about the worldly affairs. Soon after marriage man and woman develop mutual possessiveness. Thus this "*Mamata*" or mineness is also dedicated along with the word "*Dara*" or wife.

When a person brings a wife home he begins to feel the necessity of setting up a home. With the acquisition of a new home he will begin to be much attached to it. He will begin to say, "This is my house". It is observed that people will be attached towards the acquisitions of new objects. In order to alleviate this attachment towards one's home, through the means

of the use of the word "Aagara" or house it is also dedicated to Divinity.

In course of time when a son will be born, the couple will begin attaching their affections to him. So this child is also dedicated, by using the word "Putra" or son in the consecration Mantra. After the birth of a son to the householder, his relations and neighbours will come on the pretext of congratulating the advent of an heir. Some will bring presents for the offspring. Some others will bring toys like parrots, peacock etc. As time advances in entertaining these guests, the householder will develop attachment towards his relations and neighbours. Then he will be saying: "He is my maternal uncle, the other is Paternal uncle, she is my aunt, etc." So with a view to bringing about detachment it is introduced in the *Mantra* :- "Oh ! Prabhu ! I am dedicating even my intimate persons at your feet.

Now this son will begin to grow. Then worry will start as to how he should be educated, what arrangements have to be made for his marriage etc. The householder will begin to think that he should earn more. द्वितीयेनार्जितं धनम् *Dwitiyenaarjitam dhanam*. "I was single before. Then we became two. Then we turned out to be three and 'Prabhu' alone knows how big this family will grow. Now is the time to make enough money so that all these members can be maintained." There is a proverb which says that in a poor man's house the empty vessels make more noise. "यस्य गेहे टका नास्ति हा हा टका टकटकायते" (*Yasya gehey taka nasti ha ha takataka takayatae*.) Therefore he ponders: "Let me forget all other things and remember "भजकलदारं भजकलदारं कलदारं भज मूढमते" (*Bhaja kaldaaram bhaja kaldaaram kaldaaram bhaja mudha mate*.) and so saying the householder engages himself in earning more money.

Thus in this life he forgets even eating and drinking and sleeping, forgets all his other responsibilities and engages his

mind in making more and more money. For him worldly position and other worldly status, all will be centred in money alone.

For money's sake he will disregard Divinity and will engage in the worship of goddess Laxmi for material prospects.

With a view to assisting such *Jivas* to abandon their interest in such pursuits the word "Vitta" which means 'money' is provided in the *Mantra*. Money is the primary cause of all calamities. So let this also be dedicated at the feet of *Bhagavan*.

A person may enlarge his business and earn large amounts. He may perform the marriages of his children with great pomp. When they grow in age, their children may be joining hands in commerce and industry. By now the father will have grown into an old man. He will begin to grow weak. His hair will also turn grey. His vision will become weak. He will begin to think of his coming end. He will begin to think of gaining some "Punya" or merit. So he develops attachment or interest in earning merit. Therefore it is provided in the *Mantra* as follows:- "Whatever demerit or merit I have accumulated in this and the other world its result I surrender to you".

Here one may ask that, it will be all right if one surrenders all demerit to the divine Being, why should any one offer his "Punya" or merit, because it is something that will be of help to one. To this the answer is, that if one tries to keep any right of the accumulated merit but excludes the rights of demerit, then in order to enjoy the remaining part of merit one has to take birth and come into this world and thus create the possibility of one more delay in uniting with *Bhagavan*.

Therefore, according to the statements of Acharyashri, gopis who are detained in the inner apartments of their houses,

had attained *Bhagavat Sayujya* after being released from demerits and merits. The same aspect can be understood from the following quotation from '*Subhodhini*' on Shrimad Bhagavatam:-

“कोटि ब्राह्मकल्पेषु कुम्भिपाकादिनरकेषु यावद्
दुखं भवेत् तावद् दुखं भगवद् विरहे क्षणमात्रेण जातम् ।
कोटि ब्राह्मकल्पेषु स्वर्गादिलोकेषु
यावत्सुखमनुभूयते तावत् सुखं भगवदाश्लेषे क्षण मात्रेणैवानुभूतम् ।”

*Koti Brahma kalpeshu kumbhipaakaadi narakeshu yavat
dukham bhavet taavad dukham Bhagavadvirahe
kshanamaatrena jaatam, koti Brahmakalpeshu swar-
gaadilokeshu yavatsukhamanubhuyate taavatsukham
Bhagavadaasleshe kshanamaatrenaivaanubhutam.*

(*Raasa Panchadhyee*)

From this it is evident that as soon as an individual experiences intense agony due to the separation from Divinity he will be wiping off all his sins. In a similar way when a person concentrates on the Divine Being and as a consequence experiences joy of union, then also he will be putting an end to the accumulation of merits. So that there is no delay in realisation of Divinity it is stated “इहपराणि” *Iha paraani* meaning that the *Jiva* will be dedicating all the worldly and other worldly gains and losses to HIM.

SURRENDER OF SELF

Thus a *Jiva* has dedicated everything to *Bhagavan*. Now what is left for *Jiva* to do? To this the answer is provided :- “आत्मना सह समर्पयामि” *Aatmanasaha samarpayami* meaning that I am surrendering everything along with my soul (*Atman*).“ In

other words it means that a *Jiva* belongs to Divinity alone. He has no right over his own soul. All the rights now vest in Shri Krishna.

Here a *Jiva* surrenders everything and thus accepts “*Dasatva*” or servitude of *Bhagavan* in all respects.

Let us revert to the words of Prahladji - seventh canto of Srimad Bhagavatam --:- “श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनम् / अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनम्//” *Sravanam keertanam Vishnoh smaranam paadasevanam, archanam vandanam daasyam sakhyamatmanivedanam.*

Pointing out to the nine-fold *Bhakti* or devotion he clarifies the form of self-surrender by using the words : “*Atmanivedanam*.” It also indicates that unless a person dedicates everything, ‘*Bhakti*’ cannot be achieved, because unless one is prepared to accept “*Tadiyatva*” or belonging to *Bhagavan*, he cannot hope to gain “*Sviyatva*” or being *Bhagavan*’s own. And this “*Tadiyatva*” or belonging to *Bhagavan* is achieved through self-dedication only.

Taking the final shelter in Divine Being, known as “*Sharanagati*” through the means of full-fledged self-dedication, will help the devotee to realise Divinity. Even after discarding all sorts of attachment or possessiveness over material objects if one will still maintain “*mamata*” or mineness in one’s own self or one will not prefer to relinquish one’s authority on one’s self, then one will be vainly calling one self as the servant or *sevak* of the Divine Being.

If a *Jiva* dedicates everything but withholds the surrender of his *Atma* or fails to establish union of *Atma* with Divinity then what will this *Atma* do alone? Why should this *Atma* be kept

separate from Brahman? It is only a sort of kinship with other objects of the world. But the fundamental element is *Atma* alone.

This body, this vital air, these organs of senses, wife, son, house etc., are related to us due to the physical relation of *Atman* with body. If the chief object is not surrendered then all the statements mentioned before will be in vain.

Therefore, one has to dedicate one's *Atman* also so that he can attain freedom from all kinds of limitations. That is why at the end it is added:- "*atmana saha samarpayami*", meaning that "I am dedicating everything along with my *atma*".

SENTIMENT IN "I AM YOUR SERVANT:" i.e. SERVITUDE

Now one can ask the self-dedicating person:- "Oh! Brother! You have surrendered everything. You have no authority or power even over your *Atman*. Now tell us what particular status you maintain at the moment?" The answer to this question is: "*Dasoham*", meaning that: "I am the servant of *Bhagavan*. The Supreme Divinity is now my master."

Many people utter the words "*so aham*". They insist that they are Brahman "*aham Brahma asmi*". I am the same as HE is"

Acharyashri has pondered over the subject and stated that these words "*Soaham*" produce a kind of ego in *Jiva* and in order to please the Divinity, Shri Krishna, only the sentiment of humbleness is the most coveted object. This word "*aham*" will be considered as a form of obstacle. When ego becomes prevalent, even the customary state of a servant *Sevak dharma*

will come to an end. For this reason the word "*DA*" is prefixed to the words "*Soaham*". Therefore, we get the words "*Daso'ham*". It is the ordianment of Shrimad Acharyashri that out of this sentiment of servitude only a *jiva* can hope to attain that paramount state and can acquire the sentiment of love for Divine Being. With this intention he has used these words "*Daso'ham*" instead of "*So'ham*".

In the sixth canto of Shrimad Bhagavat, Vrutasura says about his most cherished *dharma* as follows:-

अहं हरे तव पादैकमूलदासानुदासो भवितास्मिभूयः ।
मनः स्मरेतासुपतेर्गुणांस्ते गृणीत वाक् कर्म करोतु कायः ॥

Aham Hare tava padaikamuladaasaanudaso bhavitaasmi bhuyah,

manah smaretaasupatergunaamste gruneeta vaakkar-makarotu kaayah
Shrimad Bhagavata 6-11-24

This means :- :Oh! *Bhagavan*! I am the servant of that servant who takes shelter at your feet. I praise the virtues, think of you and offer *seva* with all faculties of my mind, speech and body. "May it be in whatever state, when the emotion of humility disappears and the sentiment of ego comes to the front, at that very moment the *Jiva* will find an end to his state of servitude. But when this sentiment of servitude remains present in its full fledged form the devotee will definitely achieve the ultimate results of his efforts. It means that he will attain the Knowledge of the *Swarupa* or form of *Bhagavan*.

"OH ! KRISHNA I AM YOURS"

A *jiva* dedicates everything to the Divine Being. Then he realises that then onwards the overlordship will remain with Divinity. With this realisation he foregoes his own proprietary rights and will begin to believe that in fact he is the servant of

Divinity. He says: "Oh! Krishna! I am yours." As if he wants to put his signature to the document called self-dedication he repeats "Oh! Krishna! I am yours:.. By uttering these words he will destroy "*mamatva*" or mineness and "*ahanta*" or ego and develop the sentiment of belonging to *Bhagavan*.

In this connection an emotionally charged verse is presented here:

जव मै था तव हरि नहि, अब हरि है मै नाहि ।
प्रेमगली अति सांकरी ता में दो न समाहि ॥

*Jab mai tha tab Hari nahi, ab Hari hai mai nahi,
premagali ati saankaree tamen do na samaahee.*

THE DIVINITY IS PLEASED BY LOVE

In the path of devotion there is a principle which advocates that if a person wants to convert anyone towards himself he has to first attempt to belong to the other. As long as one does not belong to the other how can the other be turned towards one?

When you feel yourself belonging to someone with love and true sentiment of heart then with the strength of the power of attraction of that love you will attract the other towards you. This happens because love has a predominant feature called attraction.

When a person is encouraged with an emotion of selfishness and develops affection for another then it is called "*vasana*" or passion. But when these affections are generated on the basis of pure love alone one can attain Divinity. *Brahman* is pleased with love. There is no other experience.

Shri Govindswami who was most devoted to *Bhagavan* writes in one of his devotional songs

प्रीतम प्रीत ही सों पैये ।

यद्यपिरूपगुण शील सुधरता, इन बातन न रिझैये ॥

सत्कुल जन्म कर्म शुभ लक्षण वेद पुराण पढैये ।

“गोविन्द प्रभु” बिन स्नेह सुवालो रसना कहाँ नचैये ॥

Preetam preta hee son paiye

yadyapiroopa-guna-sheela-sudharata

In baatan na rijhaiye

satkula janma karma subha lakshana

Veda-Puraana padhaiye

Govinda Prabhu bina sneha

suvaalo rasanaa kahaa nachaiye

One can please his father with discipline or polite conduct, a son with affection and a beloved with love. "*Vasana*" or passion means external show. Love indicates the state of belonging to one. To obtain this state of belonging it is absolutely necessary to have the sentiment of "*Tadiyatva*" or belonging to Him.

So if you want *Bhagavan* to belong to you, first you must belong to Him. When once you belong to Him, thereafter what is achieved is the state wherein you will become one with HIM and HE will become yours, what is otherwise known as मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् *Mayi te teshu chaapyaham*.

As long as *Bhagavan* does not accept us, till then our position will be always unsteady. But be assured that when *Bhagavan* accepts us once there is no power in this world that can harm us. Nothing can afflict you if you turn yourself to HIM and remain under the benevolent protection of *Bhagavan*'s feet.

When you are exposed to heat you will feel the agony of it. But when you take the shelter of shadows where is the question of pain from heat? The persons who are devoted to *Bhagavan* emphasize the same matter.

छायाहित अकुलाय गदाधर तव्यो चरण को मूल”

Chaayaa hita akulaaya Gadaadhar takyo charanako moola

HOW TO CROSS THE OCEAN IN THE FORM OF SANSARA

Acharyashri has also preached in "*Shiksha shloki*" at the time of "*Asura Vyamoha lila*" (at the time when Acharyashri left this mortal world)

यदा बहिर्मुखा यूयं भविष्यथ कथंचन ।
तदा कालप्रवाहस्थादेहचित्तादयोऽप्युत ।
सर्वथा भक्षयिष्यन्ति युष्मानिति मतिर्मम ॥

*Yadaa bahirmukhaa yuyam bhavisyatha kathanchana
tadaa kaalpravahastha dehachittadayopyuta
sarvathaa bhakshayisyanti yushmaaniti matirmama*

This means that this world is like an ocean. Therein lie many kinds of desires, avarices, delusions of mind, jealousies, violence, falsehoods, carnal pleasures (*Bhoga vrutti*), ego, pride etc, as if they are the creatures of destruction in water like crocodiles.

The moment a *Jiva* steps out of the boat called "*Sharana gati*" or the ultimate assylum or in other words when he turns away from his *Bhagavan*, immediately death in the form of crocodiles will swallow him

Has *Jiva* any power to swim across this vast ocean called "*Sansara*" all alone ? But then Divinity HIMSELF has assured :

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
भवामि न चिरात् पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥

*Teshaamaham samurdhartaa mrutyusamsaarasaagaraat
bhavaami na chiraat Paartha mayyaveshitachetasaam*

(Gita 12-7)

According to *Bhagavad Gita* only surrender to *Bhagavan* can lead one across the ocean in the form of *Sansara*.

If you have a "*Darshan*" of the '*Swarupa*' of *Shri Nathji* you will find HIS left hand raised as if HE is inviting you:

तस्मान्मच्छरणं गोष्ठं मनार्थं मत्परिग्रहम् ।
गोपाये स्वात्मयोगेन सोऽयं मे व्रत आहितः ॥

Tasmaanmacharanam gostham Mannaatham Mat-parigraham

Gopaaye Swatmayogena so ayam Me vrata aahitah.

(*Bhaagavat* 10-25-18)

With the second hand placed on HIS Waist, HE indicates: "Look! If you come under MY protection you will find this ocean of "*Samsara*" remaining only upto your waist".

For ordinary persons it is an impossible task to swim this "*samsara sagar*". Therefore let us shift our weight of responsibilities to Divine Being and request HIM:- "Oh! *Bhagavan*! There is no doubt that I belong to YOU. Now you can do whatever YOU desire regarding me. I have full confidence that whatever YOU do for me will be for my welfare alone."

With this faith in heart let us repeat: "Oh! Krishna! I am YOURS. In YOUR presence I can only say that I belong to YOU. That is all I can utter. I have no power of speech to add more".

In this manner a brief discussion on the initiation of *Brah-masambandha* in the form of self-dedication is completed.